



Montgomery County Council

From the Office of Councilmember Marilyn Praisner

For Immediate Release

July 7, 2004

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COUNCIL COMMITTEE REJECTS BID TO WEAKEN PROTECTIONS FOR CABLE MODEM CUSTOMERS

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The County Council's Management & Fiscal Policy Committee on Tuesday afternoon soundly rejected amendments favored by Comcast that would undermine proposed customer service protections for cable modem customers in the County.

"Montgomery County is about to be the first local jurisdiction to put in place customer service standards for companies that provide cable modem service," said Councilmember Marilyn Praisner, who chairs the committee. "These standards will protect cable modem customers by requiring companies to address problems in a timely fashion – or face penalties. The standards are modest and reasonable, but apparently aren't lenient enough for Comcast. That's just too bad. If it's a choice between serving consumers or big business, I'll choose cable consumers any day of the week."

"Cable modem customers aren't organized," added Councilmember Phil Andrews. "They depend on us to stand up for them – and not to 'jump' when Comcast lobbyists say 'jump.' If the County Council and the County Executive betray their trust to County consumers – many of whom depend on cable modem service to telework or work from home -- then shame on us. The County Executive's flip-flop on this issue is just awful."

The proposed Executive Regulation was first approved by the Committee some weeks ago, with the support of the County Executive, the County Cable Office, and the County Attorney. On Tuesday, June 29, just as the full Council prepared to vote on the measure, amendments favored by Comcast that had already been rejected by the Committee were put forward and the vote delayed. The County Executive's office now says they are in favor of the Comcast-supported amendments they had earlier rejected.

"This 11th-hour attempt to put Comcast's interests over those of County cable modem customers should be rejected," said Councilmember Praisner. "Let's move ahead to be the first local jurisdiction to give cable modem customers some assurances that they'll get what they pay for."

The regulation will come before the full Council again on July 13. # # #